

Position Description: Commercial Economic Assistant

❖ **Basic Function of the Position:**

The incumbent reports on a variety of macroeconomic and micro economic issues, identifies and promotes U.S. export opportunities and is post's primary expert on non-proliferation, ports issues and trade compliance. Incumbent formulates recommendations and advises senior management on U.S. government economic policy. As needed, negotiates with members of the Sri Lankan government on policies. Develops and maintains close working relationships with a wide range of senior officials from government, the private sector and civil society in order to promote U.S. interests.

❖ **Major Duties and responsibilities:**

Economic Reporting and Analysis (50%): Drafts daily reports on economic and business news and trends for inclusion in daily reporting cable and to keep Washington, DC informed of developments. Drafts longer in-depth reports on the economy and economic policy developments, particularly on topics related to the rest of the incumbent's work responsibilities. Independent of supervision, identifies relevant reporting topics, obtains first-hand information from government and private sector contacts, analyzes supporting data, formulates an opinion on how U.S. policy is affected and creates a report that conveys nuances not otherwise available to management. Reporting topics could include U.S. sanctions, international financial institutions, telecommunications, trade policy, anti-corruption efforts, transportation, labor issues, tourism, nuclear non-proliferation, ports, entrepreneurship, education, gender issues, illicit trade and macroeconomic policy. Establish and maintain a broad range of contacts with Sri Lankan officials in the offices of the President, Prime Minister and Cabinet Ministers; Members of Parliament, representatives of various political parties; business executives, boards of directors of business associations; nongovernmental organizations; diplomatic missions; and security forces. Make direct contacts with high-ranking Sri Lankan and Maldivian officials when helpful and/or required. Formulate recommendations and advise on U.S. government policy, and as needed, negotiate with members of the Sri Lankan government on policies.

Commercial and Business Outreach (25%): Develops and maintains extensive contacts in Sri Lanka and Maldives, including middle to upper level government officials, executives in banking, commerce and industry, and trade associations. Uses contacts to identify trade issues, develops opportunities and partners for U.S. firms. Monitor regulatory information, trade issues, laws and regulations, affecting U.S. exports. Responds to trade inquiries from U.S. firms seeking to export and requests from host country and the Maldives government/private sector institutions interested in buying U.S. products and services. Trade Control Compliances: The Commercial Assistant is responsible for sensitive but unclassified programs such as the export Licensing Program as well as the Pre-Licensing and End-User-Checks. Work with the Department of Commerce, including the Foreign Commercial Services (FCS) in Chennai as well as Commerce officers in the United States, to solicit information on U.S. policy. Advise management on the effectiveness of U.S. trade control policy in Sri Lanka and Maldives. Tenders and Procurement Inquiries: Identifies the most promising tendering opportunities for U.S. companies. Obtains tendering details and advises U.S. companies how to structure the most competitive tenders. Posts tendering opportunities on the Department of State's business information database system (BIDS).

Container Security Initiative (CSI) (10%): Works with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's CSI office in Colombo regarding their programs. Needs to assure that the CSI programs adhere to U.S. policy and the objectives of the Mission.

Non-proliferation issues (10%): Works with the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE) on the Mega ports Project which seeks to prevent the illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive material, prevent terrorist attempts to disrupt global trade through ports in Sri Lanka, and prevent attempts to make use of commercial shipping to further terrorist schemes. Coordinate with USDOE and relevant government stakeholders such as the Sri Lanka Ports Authority, Sri Lanka Customs and the Atomic Energy Regulatory Council to facilitate official visits and training by USDOE Mega ports officials. Based on existing relationships with the government, recommends participants for training both domestically and in the United States. Arranges access to ports for U.S. officials. Works with USDOE on Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) - Duties include coordination of USDOE visits to the Atomic Energy Regulatory Council.

Information Technology and Other Office Functions (5%): Maintains the time and attendance (T & A) records for local staff in the Section. Designs, publish, maintain and periodically update the U.S. Embassy Business web page. Maintains and updates the host country and Maldives econ/commercial contact records in the Contact Data Base Management Maintains a data base of Econ/Commercial contacts who are nominated for exchange programs related to economic and commercial matters.